card
can't get enough gio?

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its all of them in a list

- Supposedly: What actually happened with The Odd Gentlemen
- Supposedly: What happened with What Pumpkin NYC
- Boy, that's a lot.
  - > While parts of the ipgd post are true, the post distorts what happened into a story designed to make Andrew look like he did no wrong
  - > This period of limbo lasted for nearly two years of development time because Andrew wouldn't deliver the cornerstone design document.
  - > Andrew had TOG spend their budget (the Kickstarter funds) on making 3D animatics and animations for the Homestuck finale video (Act 7), instead of working on Hiveswap. Significant portions of the Act 7 animation were in progress or finalized as early as 2013, the work all done in secret by The Odd Gentlemen.
  - > Andrew justified this by saying the properties were related and the Act 7 assets would be used in Hiveswap.
  - > So The Odd Gentlemen shifted to King's Quest.
  - > The problem was when Andrew was ready for TOG to work on Hiveswap he demanded it be worked on right away. At this point TOG was on schedule to finish and deliver King's Quest, and needed to finish that project first, but Andrew wouldn't have it.
  - > Andrew had a habit of handing off projects to teams and then disappearing for the duration only to show up at the end and demand

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More on the Hiveswap Odd Gentlemen Debacle

17 min read (27 min w/ quotes)

Posted Thu Jan 14, 2021 by GiovanH in fandom

Series: **The Hiveswap Saga**

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> Update from the Future
>
> I **cannot emphasize enough** that this is my description of claims someone else made and relayed to me. I have done as much follow-up and confirmation/debunking as possible, but this is an article **about an accusation**.
>
> The only things I'm treating as truly confirmed are the ones that I was able to independently confirm, which I've noted. Enough of it is verifiably true that it was worth telling people about, but I *cannot personally endorse* this account. It's not my claim!

When I wrote the Hiveswap article, I left a note asking for people to contact me if there were any facts I got wrong or major events I missed. A number of people took me up on that, which I am thankful for.

However, there was one big report I got that was too significant to just edit into the article. Because these allegations were new, and from a credible source, I thought they warranted their own article and research.

By the request of the source (because Andrew is known to be aggressively litigious), I have edited our conversation into a synthetic document summarizing their position. This is a summary of the claims from the source to preserve their anonymity and ensure clarity. I am not yet asserting anything, just stating what the source said; I'll hold my personal comments until after the whole thing. Here is that report:

Supposedly: What *actually* happened with The Odd Gentlemen

> The biggest reason there's an NDA in place about The Odd Gentlemen's involvement is that Andrew wanted to cover up the fact that much of the blame is on Andrew's failure to deliver a workable plan to the studio in the agreed-upon schedule.
>
> While parts of the ipgd post are true, the post distorts what happened into a story designed to make Andrew look like he did no wrong. What actually happened is this:

> Andrew and The Odd Gentlemen committed to a development schedule that started with a design document Andrew needed to write. However, he failed to produce that document on time, which wrecked the schedule.
>
> During this period, when TOG could not work on any specifics of Hiveswap (because Andrew wouldn't provide the requisite documents), Andrew had TOG work on general assets. This period of limbo lasted for nearly *two years* of development time because Andrew wouldn't deliver the cornerstone design document.
>
> At some point during that time **Andrew had TOG spend their budget (the Kickstarter funds) on making 3D animatics and animations for the Homestuck finale video (Act 7), instead of working on Hiveswap.** Andrew justified this by saying the properties were related and the Act 7 assets would be used in Hiveswap.
>
> Significant portions of the Act 7 animation were in progress or finalized as early as 2013, **the work all done in secret by The Odd Gentlemen.**
>
> This was all completely off-schedule. Eventually, TOG decided they had wasted too much time making comic assets for Homestuck and needed to work on work that was on track to go forward, which Hiveswap was not.
>
> So The Odd Gentlemen shifted to King's Quest. King's Quest was still an adventure game, so TOG felt they would be able to reuse some of the generic adventure game material for when it came time to work on Hiveswap again.
>
> The problem was when Andrew was ready for TOG to work on Hiveswap he demanded it be worked on right away. At this point TOG was on schedule to finish and deliver King's Quest, and needed to finish that project first, but Andrew wouldn't have it.

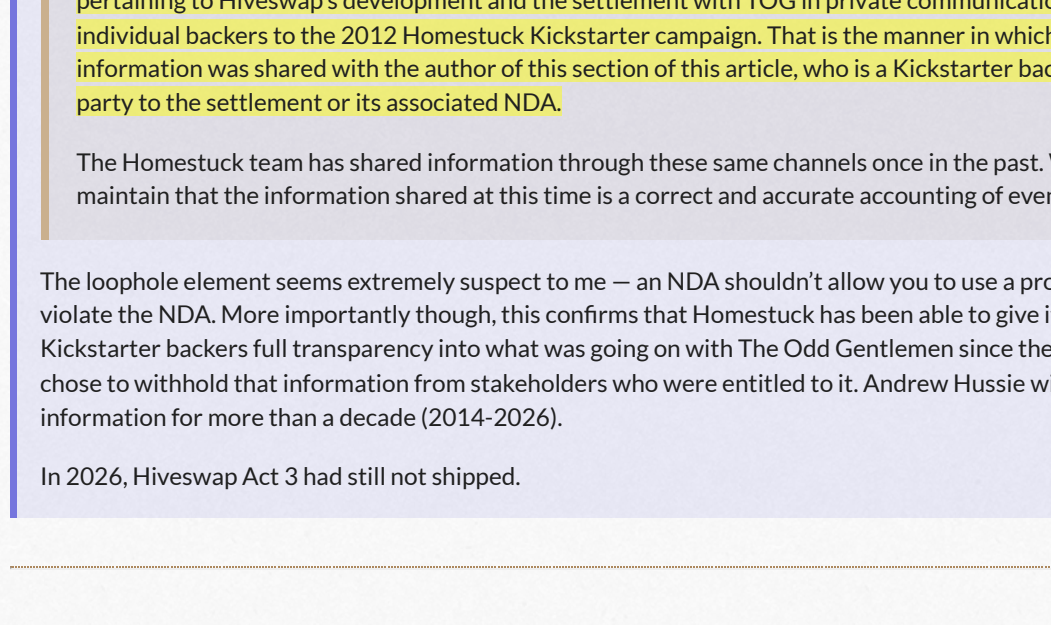
Supposedly: What happened with What Pumpkin NYC

> I realize this is a deeply unsatisfying answer, but Andrew scrapped the 3D hiveswap content on a whim.
>
> Andrew had a habit of handing off projects to teams and then disappearing for the duration only to show up at the end and demand sweeping changes. He would have posters thrown out because he suddenly disliked the art or the artist, or send products to be re-manufactured because he suddenly decided he wanted a different design. He had no respect for other people's time or work outside them being tools for his "vision".
>
> This is what happened with WPNYC; Act 1 was in a shippable state at the end of 2014, and Act 2 was nearly done. Andrew just decided to go another direction and scrap the work. There wasn't some issue with the rights or engine, it was just Andrew wanting it to be different.
>
> Not crediting WP NYC also fits in with a long pattern of behaviour. Depriving people of proper credit is something Andrew had a significant habit of doing. He would hold grudges against creators (that were not his close friends) that started to gain popularity as "the" artist for a character. Andrew responded to some artists who got jobs to do posters and other items but kept doing fanart by ending the relationship and scrubbing as much information as he could of their involvement.
>
> The money problems are also not clear cut. What Pumpkin was bringing in seven figures throughout the pauses on merchandise alone.
>
> Andrew would effectively allot allowances to certain projects, and if they couldn't make it he would let people fail. He would assert that things should be doable on a certain schedule and budget, but then make sudden demands and sweeping changes.

> Update from the Future
>
> In April 2026, in an attempt to discredit this article, Homestuck confirmed this source was a What Pumpkin employee.

> Update from the Future
>
> In April 2026, in an attempt to discredit this article, Homestuck describes the following "loophole" in their NDA with The Odd Gentlemen that they assert allows them to share details covered by that NDA:
>
> > *Homestuck*
> >
> > :
> >
> > Please note that all information shared in this section is in compliance with the non-disclosure agreement (NDA) that Homestuck signed with The Odd Gentlemen (TOG) as a condition of their 2015 settlement. The NDA expressly provides an exception that permits disclosure of information pertaining to Hiveswap's development and the settlement with TOG in private communication with individual backers to the 2012 Homestuck Kickstarter campaign. That is the manner in which this information was shared with the author of this section of this article, who is a Kickstarter backer not party to the settlement or its associated NDA.
> >
> > The Homestuck team has shared information through these same channels once in the past. We maintain that the information shared at this time is a correct and accurate accounting of events.
>
> The loophole element seems extremely suspect to me — an NDA shouldn't allow you to use a proxy to violate the NDA. More importantly though, this confirms that Homestuck has been able to give its Kickstarter backers full transparency into what was going on with The Odd Gentlemen since the start and chose to withhold that information from stakeholders who were entitled to it. Andrew Hussie withheld this information for more than a decade (2014-2026).
>
> In 2026, Hiveswap Act 3 had still not shipped.

Boy, that's a lot.



Okay! That's the story I was told, now let's dive in a bit.

Obviously a lot of this is hard or impossible for me[1] to fact-check, given the innate secrecy of the thing; there are only a handful of people in the world who *could* confirm or disprove this, and generally those people directly profit from that information *not* being shared at all.

Given all that, I have still tried to do what I could to find any evidence related to this situation to see whether it conflicts with the account or if it supports the claim. I'll fill in what gaps I can.

As with the original Hiveswap article, while I have done my best to verify everything below, it's entirely possible I got something wrong or missed something significant. If so, please let me know (leave a comment, or use a contact from the sidebar) so I can make the relevant corrections. If you've experienced something described here yourself, let me know! I'll note any changes at the bottom.

> While parts of the ipgd post are true, the post distorts what happened into a story designed to make Andrew look like he did no wrong

This makes sense. As I discussed in The Hiveswap Fiasco, Andrew volunteered the information in the ipgd post in the first place:

> From what I can tell, if this account is true*, Andrew Hussie voluntarily sent ipgd this information through a Kickstarter private message in order to circumvent some provision in the settlement. Given that this information is essentially leaked *by* Andrew himself, it's worth being sceptical.

Also, ipgd's post definitely portrays Andrew as the victim and TOG as the abuser, so it does "make Andrew look like he did no wrong." Her account has such inflammatory statements as "odd gentlemen stole kickstarter money" and "they straight up signed up to steal money from us". I'll talk about ipgd's post a few more times in this article, where the details line up, but the general theme is that a few parts are true, but framed in an intentionally misleading way.

> Update from the Future
>
> In April 2026, Homestuck described ipgd's account as "Andrew… sharing an accurate account of TOG's malfeasance", indicating this information *was* leaked by Andrew through ipgd's tumblr.

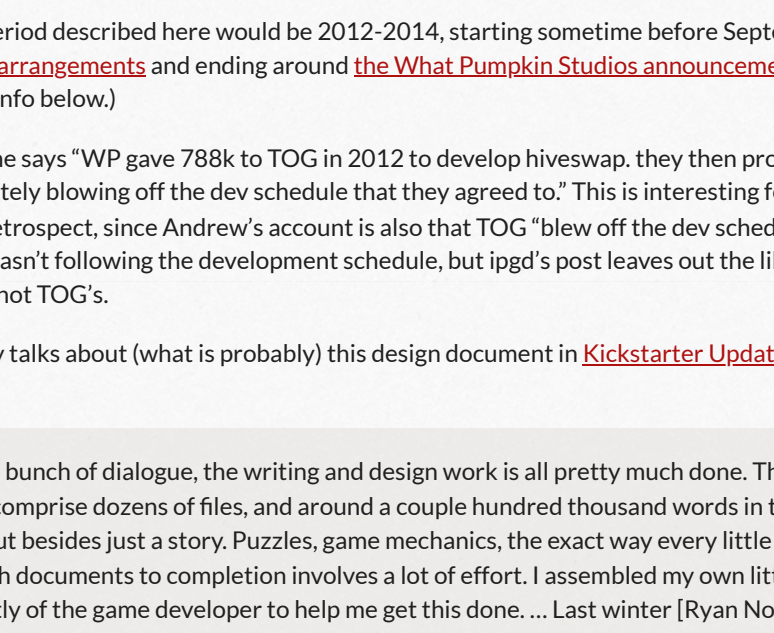
> This period of limbo lasted for nearly *two years* of development time because Andrew wouldn't deliver the cornerstone design document.

The two-year period described here would be 2012-2014, starting sometime before September 2012 with the pre-kickstarter arrangements and ending around the What Pumpkin Studios announcement in October 2014. (More timeline info below.)

In ipgd's post, she says "WP gave 788k to TOG in 2012 to develop hiveswap. they then proceeded to do next to nothing, completely blowing off the dev schedule that they agreed to." This is interesting for her to have mentioned, in retrospect, since Andrew's account is also that TOG "blew off the dev schedule". According to this account, TOG wasn't following the development schedule, but ipgd's post leaves out the likelihood that this was Andrew's fault, not TOG's.

Andrew actually talks about (what is probably) this design document in Kickstarter Update #15, published June 2014:

> Aside from a bunch of dialogue, the writing and design work is all pretty much done. The game design documents comprise dozens of files, and around a couple hundred thousand words in total. There was a lot to think about besides just a story. Puzzles, game mechanics, the exact way every little thing works. Bringing such documents to completion involves a lot of effort. I assembled my own little team independently of the game developer to help me get this done. … Last winter [Ryan North] and I scribbled down all this stuff. The basic outline of the game, tons of funny ideas and puzzles and such. Then in the following months, I and some other people ironed all that out into documents that programmers can actually understand and turn into a game.
>
> …
>
> So what does that mean for the status of development? Since all the documentation is just about done, it's out of my hands at this point. It's now up to the developer to finish building the systems, modeling, rendering assets, testing, all that stuff. I can't really give you a solid estimate on how long that will take, since I'm not personally managing the people or resources. When it comes to things like writing I hire individuals like Ryan and others to help, but when it comes to delivering the final product, we commissioned a 3rd party developer with their own staff and time tables and all that, so it's pretty much their show now.



Actual photos of the document in question, from the KS update

By Andrew's own account, the design document was only finished in July 2014, which is exactly what my source describes.

In this context, though, it's interesting how Andrew announces the finished design document, the name of the developer, and how "it's out of my hands at this point" all at once. It's almost as if Andrew knew the document was a problem and knew TOG wouldn't be able to meet the agreed schedule, but wanted to throw TOG under the bus and give fans someone else to blame.

What Pumpkin would later assert that all the deliverables were given to TOG in 2013, but that doesn't match the timeline or the Kickstarter updates' own account.

> Update from the Future
>
> In April 2026, in an attempt to discredit this article, Homestuck confirmed that as late as 5/12/14, the main Game Design Doc ("GDD") had not been delivered to The Odd Gentlemen.
>
> > *Homestuck Team*
> >
> > Here is an email from 5/12/14:
> >
> > How's development going, by the way? The GDD files are pretty well filled in by now, so there's a lot to work with. …
> >
> > This was the date Andrew made it clear they were available to work in person. Andrew also states here that the game design docs were mostly complete, which was Andrew's responsibility, and kept up with the schedule they all agreed to.

> Andrew had TOG spend their budget (the Kickstarter funds) on making 3D animatics and animations for the Homestuck finale video (Act 7), instead of working on Hiveswap. Significant portions of the Act 7 animation were in progress or finalized as early as 2013, the work all done in secret by The Odd Gentlemen.

> Update from the Future
>
> What Pumpkin released Kickstarter Update #36, which admits that swaths of this accusation are true. TOG *did* make resources for Act 7 and it *was* done in secret. They claim that the budget for Act 7 came out of "operating funds" rather than the existing $788k TOG contract, but leave whether the money used was from Kickstarter or not unclear. They also make an argument (which you can read under that link) that having the TOG team work on Act 7 didn't pull people away from Hiveswap.

Okay so obviously this is a big one.

In an effort to gather as much information as I could about this, I reached out to some of the people who definitely *did* work on Act 7 to get their perspective.

Since WP's engagement with TOG is covered by NDA, this means the rest of the animation would have to be finished by other people who were kept in the dark about The Odd Gentlemen's involvement. So, for instance, if I could find someone who knows who did the original animatics, that would easily disprove this claim. On the other hand, if all of this *is* true, you would expect the animators to have been handed a partial product but kept in the dark about its source.

So, which is it? According to another source I was able to contact (who wishes to remain anonymous, of course), the final animation team was given the project under exactly the latter, suspicious set of circumstances.
They weren't told who worked on it previously and weren't allowed to contact the people who did the original animatics:

> **Gio**:
>
> Well, to be honest, I'm trying to run down a tip about some potentially shady behaviour with the first drafts :S
>
> I was hoping you'd been on Act 7 from the get-go and could de-confirm them, but if there was already white-label work done by people you didn't know when you joined the project, it might still be true.
>
> **Source**:
>
> Funny you should say that, because when I came onto the project I was given very cagey answers about who had worked on it previously[…] I wasn't told their names even after asking and I only recognized some of [redacted]'s animation work because [they're] a friend. I asked if I could contact any of the people who were working on it before and was shut down on that front. This is just my impression from that time, but it came off as if there was some sort of not-so-amicable-parting happening.

So, unfortunately, it looks like the Act 7 team had the experience you would expect if TOG did the original work. There's even the smoking gun that this person actually *did* try to look into the source of the original drafts, but Andrew explicitly shut them down.

Interestingly, Andrew using Hiveswap resources to supplement comic work isn't without precedent; I know it's happened before. In a conversation I had back in October for the Hiveswap article, someone from the remote team told me they were asked to work on assets for Collide shortly before WPNYC closed:

> a bit before the closing of wpny my work became more work on these assets that we need for what ended up becoming collide
>
> …
>
> there wasnt like, a hard cut that i can remember, it was like 'hey if you get time maybe do a few sprite animations between hiveswap work'

Meanwhile, here's what Andrew said personally about Act 7's production:

> The animation itself had a fairly complicated production history. I actually storyboarded it about four years ago. In fact, some of the shots I visualized before I even began Homestuck. I'd like to extend very special thanks to Angela Sham, who took the reins on the animation while it was in progress, and worked with me closely on it for about a year until it was done. She's a great animator, and I'm quite excited that she's continuing to work with us on the game.

"About four years" prior to 4/13/16 was April 2012… which was just before Andrew engaged The Odd Gentlemen. The animation released on 4/13/16, which makes "about a year until [Act 7] was done" 2015-2016. This means the WP Act 7 team (Angela Sham, Ani Roschier, Jeffrey Lai, et al.) started their work on it in 2015… which was just after 2014, when Hiveswap dropped TOG. This all fits the timeline uncomfortably well.

Going back around to that ipgd quote: "WP gave 788k to TOG in 2012 to develop hiveswap. they then proceeded to do next to nothing, completely blowing off the dev schedule that they agreed to." Again, there are details here that fit: What Pumpkin *did* pay The Odd Gentlemen $800k to develop Hiveswap, and TOG *did* produce little in the way of usable Hiveswap game material. What they produced was instead white-label work on other Homestuck projects, at Andrew's direction. Regardless of whether this was an appropriate use of resources, it's clearly wrong that it was hidden like this.

> Andrew justified this by saying the properties were related and the Act 7 assets would be used in Hiveswap.

The 4/13/2021 post contained emails which confirmed this idea:

> It was great chatting with you. We've been running through this and we think we have something that will work well for everyone.
>
> We're with you and totally want to make this something that has way more legs than just the animation — though, of course, we want that to stand alone as something incredible and work as a fantastic lead in to the game using this same style.
>
> To that end, what we think works best is that with this animation not only will me make an amazing finale, but we will also utilize this time to fully define and lockdown the style of the game while using this added conceptual time to increase the overall fidelity by defining pipelines and getting a head start on all of the art

So there were, in fact, plans to coordinate the Act 7 animation with Hiveswap, somehow. It's unclear exactly how this would have worked, but this matches details of the original allegation.

A historical note here: as of Hiveswap: Act 2, no assets from Homestuck Act 7 have been used in Hiveswap material.

> So The Odd Gentlemen shifted to King's Quest.

The Odd Gentlemen's involvement in Hiveswap was 2012-2014. King's Quest was announced in 2014 and released in 2015. It's not exactly clear *exactly* when development on King's Quest started, but I assume "some time before 2014" which, again, fits the timeline, and everyone on both sides of the table seems to agree that this is basically what happened. No surprises here.

> The problem was when Andrew was ready for TOG to work on Hiveswap he demanded it be worked on right away. At this point TOG was on schedule to finish and deliver King's Quest, and needed to finish that project first, but Andrew wouldn't have it.

This is an interesting time period, because it directly intersects with ipgd's post. Let's compare the relevant excerpts:

> **ipgd**: according to the timeline in the doc i got, WP gave 788k to TOG in 2012 to develop Hiveswap. they then proceeded to do next to nothing, completely blowing off the dev schedule that they agreed to.

According to my source, it's true that TOG did next to nothing for Hiveswap and didn't follow the development schedule. However, ipgd doesn't mention Andrew being the bottleneck and holding the project up, nor Andrew assigning TOG other, unscheduled tasks to work on.

> **ipgd**: at some point TOG apparently just completely gave up working on hiveswap, because they were tapped to develop king's quest.

My source concurs with this. The part about pausing work on Hiveswap to work on King's Quest, anyway.

> **ipgd**: however, instead of dropping out of developing the game, they decided to just… not tell WP, and proceeded to spend the money they were given on KQ's development instead.

All of this seems to simply be an assertion by ipgd. Her implication is that the document she has details this, but she chose not to make any of that information available for inspection or give any other sort of argument as for how this would be true.

By the time King's Quest development started, The Odd Gentlemen would have been long-since denied the needed design document for Hiveswap. They would be completely off-schedule, secretly working on the Act 7 animation and such; the books were likely in disarray at that point.[2]

> **ipgd**: eventually, after months of platitudes and refusals to communicate (at one point andrew even moved across the country to be able to visit TOG's offices and get the ball rolling on development, but they wouldn't even let him come in), WP realized that they'd have to drop TOG, so they terminated the contract in late 2014.

This *appears* to describe the same period of time my source describes as when Andrew "demanded they work on it right away, even though they had been doing work all along." It's also possible this describes Andrew showing up at the tailend of the project and demanding sweeping changes.

> Update from the Future
>
> In April 2026, in an attempt to discredit this article, Homestuck describes Wayward Manor as the game that distracted from Hiveswap rather than King's quest:
>
> > Here the lead suggests a time:
> >
> > Note that Wayward Manor is cited as a source of preoccupation. … The record instead indicates that Wayward Manor constrained their capacity to develop Hiveswap, and that only after did their focus shift toward King's Quest.

> Andrew had a habit of handing off projects to teams and then disappearing for the duration only to show up at the end and demand sweeping changes.

From my understanding, this is in line with how Andrew has done business in general.

Famously, in "The Talk" (a rant about Andrew's professionalism that largely doesn't map to the issues we've seen in Hiveswap), Bill Bolin gave some details into the process of working with Andrew. Andrew had a private forum (for "Art Team" or "Music Team" people) where he would post threads with vague requests. Bolin describes a sample request as:

> "A person drawn with crayon, fit to be in a X by Y inches-or-whatever-wacky-otherdimensional-measure-of-distance spot" with no mention on what kind of article/paragraph/chapter thing that its going to be sitting by, and what or who this image is supposed to represent.

Then multiple people would submit work for the prompt — give their take on it — and Andrew would pick whichever one he liked best, discarding the rest.

In a more recent account, Gankra[3] (who worked on most of the interactive, playable segments in Homestuck) gave an an interview where they describe the creative process of working with Andrew:

> Originally we developed everything over private messages on the MSPA forums with links. Over the years we would make use of email, AIM(?) chat, and a secret forum where the other artists and musicians hung out and riffed off eachother's work with occasional direction from Andrew.

They describe working with Andrew as an incredibly difficult task, since Andrew was such a hero of theirs and moved creatively at such a high speed:

> Working with [Andrew] was apparently nothing less than being in a creative firestorm, with projects being completed in an exceedingly short amount of time and often incorporating elements created on the fly.
>
> …
>
> I honestly pushed myself too hard here. I don't think Andrew really understood how hard this stuff was on me; I think he's a good enough guy that he would've given me more space if he realized what I was doing to myself. But he's just so productive and I burnt myself out really hard trying to keep up with someone who, ultimately, was my hero that I didn't want to disappoint. I have two intense negative memories from working on homestuck:
>
> - Begging Andrew (I think I was in tears irl) to just wait another day for me to finish one of our projects, because he wanted to start posting more pages of the story (he was that far ahead of me).
> - Being so stressed out from working on one of our projects that I went to a party and drunk myself sick (I normally don't drink alcohol at all, for context)
>
> …
>
> I think mostly I'm pretty happy with what I did because I know the context under which it was created. There was no time to do things right. I barely had a chance to test it.

Edit 2021-01-29: As some people are taking issue with the Bolin quote, here's another account of Andrew's process from notasenator:

> Normally Andrew will put a bunch of requests for different art assets in a thread, and people will take on those jobs and produce the assets for him. These are individual things, like a single background, character or animation.
>
> Take this example from Roseterniabound:
>
> > Shortlist of obvious needs:
> >
> > - Heirsuit John sprite
> > - Grimdark Rose sprite
> > - Rose has a dialogue portrait. Needs to be grimdark'd!
> > - John's portrait needs to be heirsuited!
> > - Maybe a Jack sprite??? Don't know if it'll be used yet, but could be fun to see anyway.
> > - one or two "pawn" agent sprites (the chess soldiers, like WV commanded)
>
> He provides only the blurriest of pictures of plot (if any at all… the description the team got for that one was "So I'm thinking of doing a pixel sprite walkabout thing for Rose, possibly including John too, not sure yet.") and people go to work.
>
> When he has the assets he needs (plus all the ones he's created himself) he goes to work by himself and creates the flash.
>
> Andrew is the storyboarder, he's the writer and animator and the person who puts it all together. The art team is just providing additional art assets so he can spend his time fighting with Flash and not drawing backgrounds or animating sprites.
>
> In this case, the difference is - to make sure things stay as secret as possible (probably because team members like to post about projects on SA) he's not posting a list of assets needed in the thread, and instead is emailing team members directly to get their pieces in. That's the only difference.

None of this summary of Andrew's asset commissioning system is meant to be at all controversial; this is simply a summary of common knowledge from the MSPAF days.

> Act 1 was in a shippable state at the end of 2014, and Act 2 was nearly done

This description of the 3D Act 1 work is mostly in line with my previous research, although exaggerated. According to What Pumpkin, the 3D NYC build was *almost* shippable, but still needed significant debugging. It was also much shorter than the Act 1 that exists now.

Act 2 being nearly done, though, seems to be speculation. It doesn't track with previous descriptions of progress.

It is highly likely that by 2014, this source no longer worked at What Pumpkin, and these descriptions of late-2014 are only semi-informed speculation.

> Not crediting WP NYC also fits in with a long pattern of behaviour. Depriving people of proper credit is something Andrew had a significant habit of doing.

Edit: It's a very bold claim that Andrew deliberately deprives people of credit over personal grudges, and one I thought I would never be able to meaningfully confirm. However… Andrew actually directly admitted to doing this:

> I know that she was the one leading the charge on the credit issues because she sent us an email about it after Act 1's release. In it she requested credit in a friendly tone, citing a few minor things appearing in Act 1 like a font design she contributed to, and small touches to characters like the gold trim on one of outfits. Probably under ordinary circumstances I would have replied to this in a friendly way, and even if her claims didn't totally track (iirc they didn't really, after consulting with some others), I'm sure I would have erred on the side of caution and just credited her. But this was a pretty crazy email to get because it wasn't even long before receiving this that I saw her in public spaces saying wildly vitriolic things about me and WP, repeating the false points from the [this article] narrative and such.
>
> After consulting with the staff on it, it seemed like the team was in agreement that there wasn't much substance to her claims, and even if there was, she'd already publicly burned the bridge with WP for anyone to be inclined to make the changes to the credits over such small points. I can at least acknowledge there's a chance some of her influence in the NYC build leaked through to the next version in small ways, and it wouldn't have been off base to credit her. But this is pretty much the only situation I can think of like that. No one else from the NYC team went improperly uncredited.

So… I mean that's that, isn't it? When pushed about a specific case, Andrew directly admits here that he was asked to credit an employee for her work, and that the request was friendly and reasonable, but because Andrew knew she had spoken poorly about What Pumpkin online he denied her her due credit.

He then tries to claim that this instance (where he got caught doing it) is the only time he's done a thing like that, despite multiple sources reporting a pattern of this sort of behaviour, albeit in less concrete ways. So that's another case where Andrew just directly admitted to doing the thing he was accused of.

Even without that confession, Andrew Hussie certainly does have a bad track record when it comes to properly crediting artists. The accusation, though, describes depriving people of proper credit as something Andrew does almost vindictively.

As I previously discussed in depth, Hiveswap Act 1 does not credit anyone involved in WP NYC and the 3D version of the game, despite using a significant amount of their work.

Hiveswap Act 2 released with the credits removed, to significant outcry (although partial credits were patched in later, after significant blowback)

Outside of Hiveswap, Paradox Space experienced a similar major crediting issue. I didn't include that story as part of the Hiveswap article, so I'll tell it now.

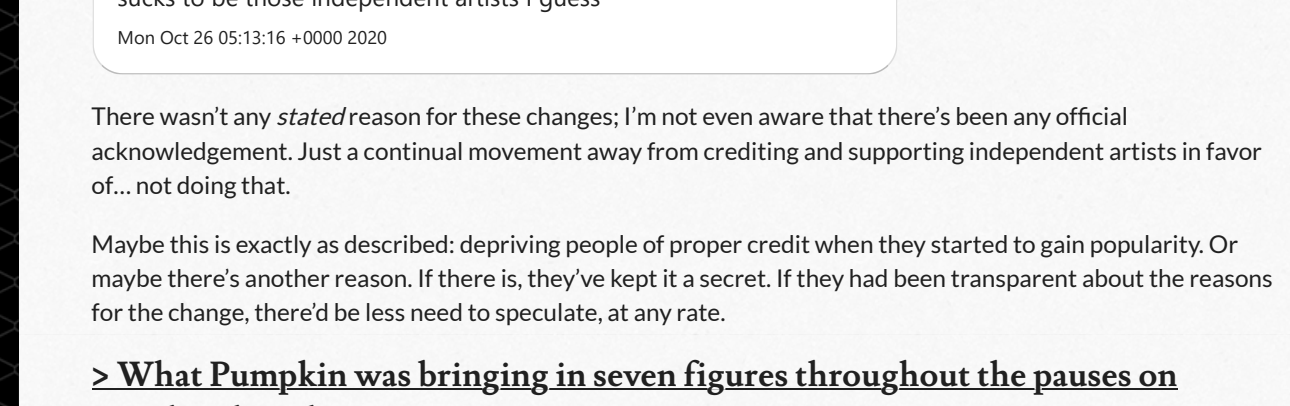
Paradox Space

Paradox Space (launched April 13, 2014) was a Homestuck spinoff webcomic with short stories set in the Homestuck universe. Importantly, it was an intensely independent project, with stories written and drawn by independent artists. As Andrew wrote in the original newspost:

> As I work on finishing the story, I tend to think a lot about where Homestuck as a creative property goes from here. It's hard to ignore the fact that it has turned into something much bigger than just a long, crazy story on the internet. It has a lot of fans, and there's a whole culture surrounding it.
>
> …
>
> The idea is also to get a lot of different artists and writers involved. It's going to be a major team effort. Occasionally I will write some comic scripts, particularly at the onset to help get this off the ground. But I'd like that to be the exception rather than the rule. I think it will be exciting to see how a talented pool of creators can work within the HS universe, and what they will bring to these characters. Scroll down to the bottom of the page to see who's contributing so far. I guarantee that list of names will expand considerably in the months ahead.

(This could be seen as an early version of Andrew's "whole weird postcanon thing" which I might write on some day.)

Paradox Space was designed to promote independent artists and give them a chance to promote themselves and their work: see the news feed for some great examples of this. There was also a tag system so you could browse comics by artists. Look at all these great people! There was even a big CONTRIBUTOR PANEL at the bottom of the page that listed all the artists and gave them each nice little bios and social links:



CONTRIBUTOR PANEL

- Zack Morrison
- Tom Siddell
- Tauhid Bondia
- Shelby Cragg
- Shad Andrews
- Rennie Kingsley
- Rachel Rocklin
- Phil Gibson
- Matt Hink
- Matt Cummings
- Matt Boyd
- Mary Cagle

SHELBY CRAGG

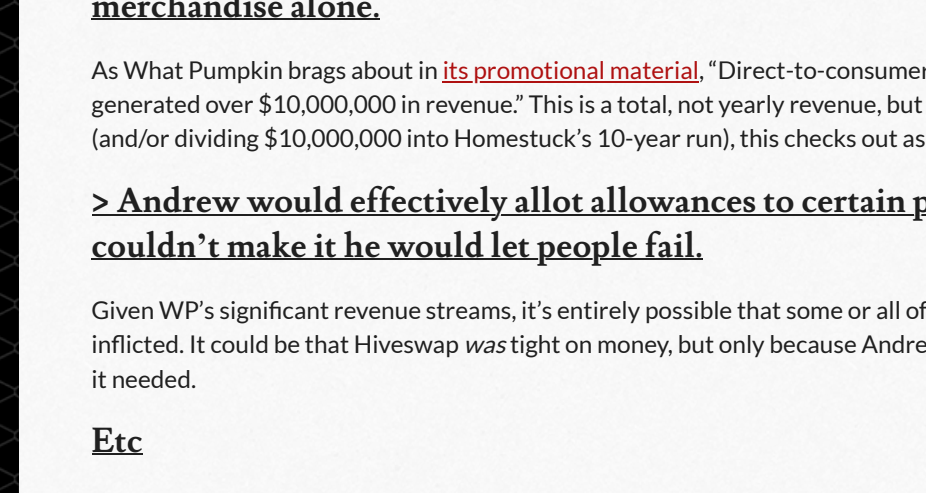
ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTOR:

Shelby Cragg is an illustrator and comic artist working in the sunny hellscape of Florida. If you're a big Homestuck fan, you probably know her as "That girl who does the art for Calliope." This is true! Good job for knowing that. Shelby also likes drawing aliens, petting cats, and drinking large amounts of caffeine. She is currently finishing up her first original webcomic, APOTHECIA, along with doing lots of other cool stuff.

www.shelbycragg.com

Paradox Space was designed to promote independent artists… until it wasn't. In November 2017, as part of the hiveswap.com redesign, the Paradox Space site was redesigned with a more streamlined look that removed all of this. The contributor panel is gone, the tags have been removed, and permalinks to contributor pages fail completely. Links to the newsposts are removed, and permalinks to news posts, too, fail. Paradox Space is linked to on the Hiveswap.com website only.

As of the October 2020 update, the Hiveswap.com website is redesigned and the links to Paradox Space are removed entirely.



gio :')
@giovan_h

so all references to paradox space have been completely scrubbed from the new hiveswap.com, huh

sucks to be those independent artists I guess

Mon Oct 26 05:13:16 +0000 2020

There wasn't any *stated* reason for these changes; I'm not even aware that there's been any official acknowledgement. Just a continual movement away from crediting and supporting independent artists in favor of… not doing that.

Maybe this is exactly as described: depriving people of proper credit when they started to gain popularity. Or maybe there's another reason. If there is, they've kept it a secret. If they had been transparent about the reasons for the change, there'd be less need to speculate, at any rate.

> What Pumpkin was bringing in seven figures throughout the pauses on merchandise alone.

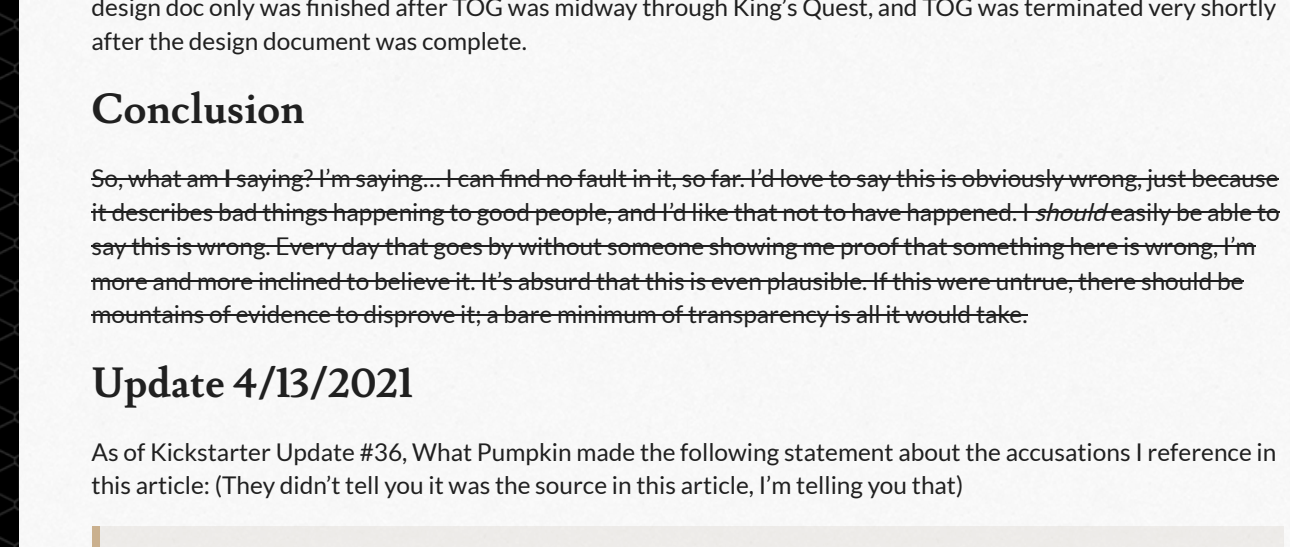
As What Pumpkin brags about in its promotional material, "Direct-to-consumer merchandise sales have generated over $10,000,000 in revenue." This is a total, not yearly revenue, but with some integral calculus (and/or dividing $10,000,000 into Homestuck's 10-year run), this checks out as an entirely reasonable number.

> Andrew would effectively allot allowances to certain projects, and if they couldn't make it he would let people fail.

Given WP's significant revenue streams, it's entirely possible that some or all of the money issues were self-inflicted. It could be that Hiveswap *was* tight on money, but only because Andrew refused to give it the budget it needed.

Etc

Here's an (**aggressively** rounded) timeline of 2012-2016, just as a visual aid:



Of special note here are that the alleged Act 7 work overlaps with TOG's involvement on Hiveswap, that the design doc only was finished after TOG was midway through King's Quest, and TOG was terminated very shortly after the design document was complete.

Conclusion

~~So, what am I saying? I'm saying… I can find no fault in it, so far. I'd love to say this is obviously wrong, just because it describes bad things happening to good people, and I'd like that not to have happened. I *should* easily be able to say this is wrong. Every day that goes by without someone showing me proof that something here is wrong, I'm more and more inclined to believe it. It's absurd that this is even plausible. If this were untrue, there should be mountains of evidence to disprove it; a bare minimum of transparency is all it would take.~~

Update 4/13/2021

As of Kickstarter Update #36, What Pumpkin made the following statement about the accusations I reference in this article: (They didn't tell you it was the source in this article, I'm telling you that)

> As an addendum, WP has identified the primary source of a disclosure to a well-circulated document of the Hiveswap development process. WP has been aware of a pattern of false claims this former employee has made since the end of their employment at the beginning of 2014. As this individual was not present during the end of the development contract with GC, nor the WP NYC development period, all of the information they have shared is based on speculation and conjecture.

There is a detailed analysis of this update in The Hiveswap Fiasco, but to summarize:

According to What Pumpkin, this is a disgruntled ex-employee who left the team in early 2014, meaning anything they said later than that is speculation. In addition to the obvious — that a whistleblower doesn't like the practices they're whistleblowing — this would mean they were not privy to the events of 2014 or later, making anything they said about that only semi-informed speculation.

This makes sense. Many of the claims made here *early* in the timeline turned out to be correct, and even verified by What Pumpkin later on. Some of the later ones seem incorrect, perhaps a mix of hearsay and semi-informed exaggerations designed to make an overall point. As with everything else, I will note which claims are solid and which are dubious.

It is entirely possible some of this information was provided in bad faith. As I discussed, some of it holds up, and some doesn't. In the same Kickstarter update, though, they explicitly confirm a significant amount of the news I broke, including multiple major points in this very article! I have also noted those cases.

> Note
>
> The announcement does its best to make it sound like this post was me somehow being hoodwinked into regurgitating slander against WP, which is simply false. I have always presented my source's claims as-is, and encouraged readers to take everything here with healthy skepticism. Claims and established points of fact *are* different, and I am careful to always treat them as such.

With Update 36, we got a bare minimum of transparency on events that happened a decade ago. According to What Pumpkin, the source here is disgruntled (obviously) but more importantly wasn't privy to events after early 2014. This means that *some* of these claims are most likely speculation, although others still seem extremely plausible, and others have been confirmed outright. It's not *disproven*, but we've chiselled out a few bits that turned out not to be right, and I see that as progress to be celebrated.

I stand by my previous conclusions, I think, but this now-confirmed behavior with Act 7 is so much worse than what was reported before. It's not just negligent or incompetent or even passively insensitive, but actively harmful.

Mismanagement and eccentricity might have explained some of the previous issues, but it can't possibly cover this: misappropriating money from a new investment – and creating a significant debt in the process – to pay a different creative debt while aggressively covering up the scandal. Not to mention attacking the reputation of an independent game dev studio and using an NDA to prevent them from defending themselves.

Not to say eccentricity is any sort of excuse, either. The sheer amount of human damage done by Hiveswap is astounding and inexcusable. Treating other people as disposable in your pursuit of your vision (driving people out of the industry, tossing out their work because you decided you asked for the wrong thing, firing them the day after they quit their jobs to work for you) is a wretched thing to do for any reason.

I wish I could demand transparency, but What Pumpkin is a company that *to this day* lists strip mall shipping companies as their business address; I don't expect them to start being upfront about their biggest failures. I'm honestly a bit worn out from all of this, so I don't know that I have another punchy conclusion in me, or some dramatic call to action.

Don't idolize people, I guess. When an auteur is surrounded by fans who believe his work is perfect and that the pursuit of his artistic vision is worth the sacrifices of other people, he'll start to believe it.

Also, don't be so attached to something that you can't allow criticism of it. Live with both eyes open.

As usual, What Pumpkin did not respond to requests for comment.

Related Reading

- Sarah Z, "A Brief History of Homestuck", a video essay about the Homestuck fandom that includes a summary of my Hiveswap work

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[1] just some guy on the internet ↩

[2] It is, of course, possible that **both** are true; TOG misused part of the Hiveswap budget **and** the new allegations about Andrew's behaviour are true. Less likely, but possible. ↩

[3] Alexis "Gankra" Beingessner, formerly known as Gankro ↩

Posted by GiovanH in fandom • Thu Jan 14, 2021 (last modified Thu May 21, 2026) • View source
Tagged: #homestuck #hiveswap #kickstarter #fiasco

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